

# The Church School Teacher

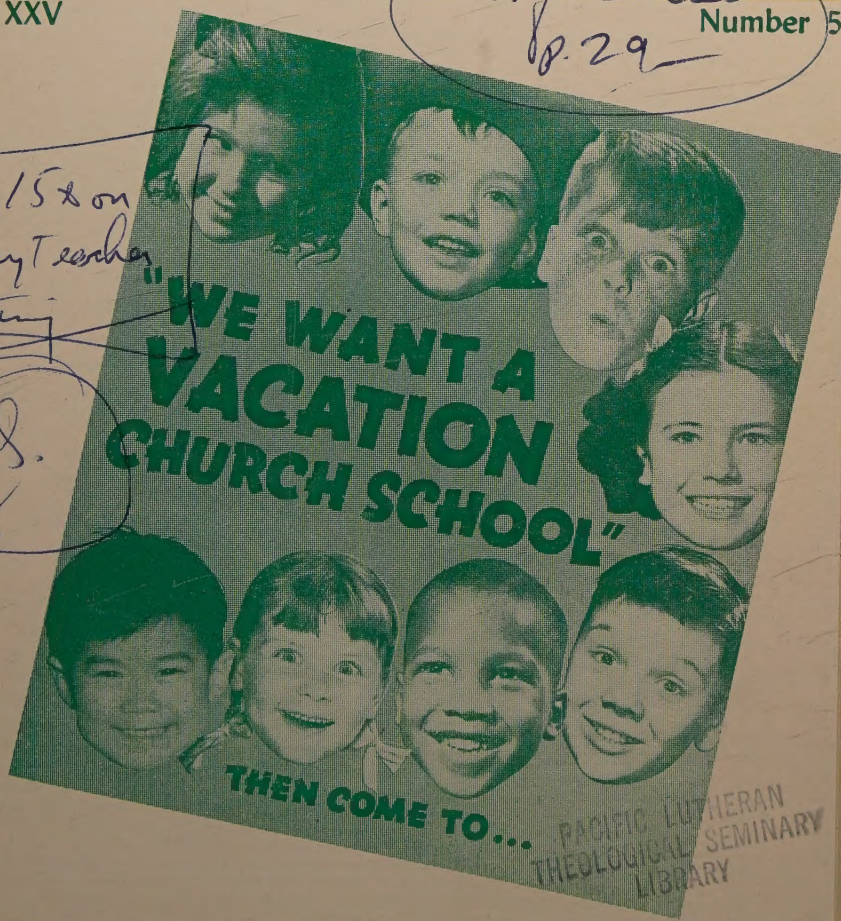
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# THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER

VOL. XXV      No. 5  
MAY 1956

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# The Church School Teacher

VOL. XXV

MAY 1956

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## Just a Few Words

By THE EDITOR

"WHAT is the next event, Daddy?" my eight-year-old asked as we sat quietly at the close of a blessed Easter day. "You know, event like Easter? What comes next?" Children certainly love events. So we had a little talk about Pentecost.

### From Old to New

Our Christian Pentecost began when one hundred twenty Christians, the entire Christian community of Jerusalem, assembled to celebrate an age-old religious festival. It was then that the Holy Spirit promised by Jesus descended upon them in tongues of fire. Three thousand persons were converted to Christianity. What a glorious occasion was the first Pentecost.

In the early church Pentecost ranked with Christmas and Easter as the third great festival of the Christian year. It is still a holiday

in much of Europe although its religious significance to most of the people is negligible. In the first centuries it was considered one of the happiest times of the year and was celebrated with songs and festivals. Today there are few special Pentecost festivals. I recall having attended only one. That was during my theological seminary days.

### A Real Event

I shan't forget that service. About seventy-five young students and their professors stood on a hilltop and sang the songs of the church, listened to a Pentecost sermon, silently promised the Lord of the church to share His good news to the uttermost parts of the world, received His benediction. It was an *event*.

And that is really what Pentecost should be. It should be the third great festival of the Chris-

tian year for it completes the cycle of the Faith: Christmas, the incarnate God with us; Easter, the crucified and arisen God for us; Pentecost, the living God in us to rejuvenate us for witnessing and service.

### The Culmination

My eight-year-old and I didn't talk about Whitsunday. Time was up. But we should have for Whitsunday, the seventh Sunday after Easter, is the culmination of the observance of the Pentecost season. In the early church the name *whit* or *white* applied to the garments usually worn by the many candidates for baptism at that season of the year. There were many candidates because during the period from Easter to Pen-

tecost the church carried on a renewed program of evangelism.

Well, that's the word about the next *event*. And what should the event mean to us? This, that the truth about Easter should inspire us to a greater commitment and to a renewed zeal to testify that the risen Lord lives in us. If we have been thus inspired Pentecost and Whitsunday should be a happy festival. I hope it will be a happy time for all of us.

### In This Issue

This is the Vacation Church School issue. We hope you will enjoy every page. The pastors will notice another report on the confirmation seminar. We have had some fine reactions to the series and are most grateful for them.

\* \* \*

Pentecost is probably the most ancient religious festival which we celebrate today. In the early Jewish calendar, Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, was dedicated to gratitude to God for the gift to Noah of the "Covenant" (involving the regular and orderly sequence of events in the physical universe—"seedtime and harvest"). Later, Pentecost became associated with the giving of the Law to Moses at Mount Sinai, and in many countries there was a practice of holding services at which the Scriptures were read all through the night. While most other Jewish festivals were just for their own community, this one paid a great deal of attention to including the stranger, or those of other faiths who happened to be in the home or community at the time.



# From Your Director

By LAEL H. WESTBERG

*Augustana Lutheran Church*

WE HAVE completed our scheduling for the fall *Together for Christ and Youth Schools*. In case you have forgotten, or didn't know, the *Together Schools* are one day seminars for present and prospective Hi-League counselors and teachers of high school Bible classes. The schools are conducted under the joint sponsorship of the Board of Youth Activities and the Board of Parish Education. Last year we held the schools in the conferences of Iowa, Illinois, New England and New York.

This year we shall be in the conferences of Nebraska, Kansas, Superior, Columbia and California. If you are a "prospective" or "present," see your pastor and have him put you on the roster. Who should attend? Besides the principals already indicated, pastors, church staff workers, interns, Sunday school superintendents, and one representative from the board of deacons of each congregation. Here is the schedule of the schools:

## Nebraska

Oct. 20—Omaha and Wahoo Districts at Trinity, Omaha

Oct. 21—Wakefield District at Thabor, Wausa

Oct. 27—Stromsburg District at St. Paul's, Osceola

Oct. 28—Kearney District at Immanuel, Bertrand

## Kansas

Nov. 3—Northern at First, Manhattan

Nov. 4—Eastern at Messiah, Kansas City

Nov. 10—Central and Southern at Trinity, McPherson

Nov. 11—Western at Bethesda, Page City

Nov. 18—Rocky Mountain at First, Longmont

## Superior

Sept. 22—Eastern Ishpeming at Bethel, Cedarville

Sept. 23—Western Ishpeming and Northern Iron Mountain at Bethany, Ishpeming

Oct. 6—Green Bay at Bethany, Escanaba

Oct. 7—Southern Iron Mountain at Our Saviour's, Iron Mountain

Oct. 13—Range at Sharon, Bessemer

Oct. 14—Wisconsin Valley at Bethlehem, Merrill

**Columbia**

Sept. 13—Boise and Nampa at Trinity, Nampa

Sept. 15—Intermountain at Elim, Ogden

Sept. 16—Montana at St. John's Helena

Sept. 22—Inland Empire at Salem, Spokane

Sept. 23—Mt. Baker at Faith, Bellingham

Sept. 29—Mt. Rainier at Bethel, Tacoma

Sept. 30—Portland at Grace, Corvallis

**California**

Oct. 6—Arizona at First, Mesa

Oct. 7—Southern at Grace, Bell

Oct. 13—Central at Trinity, Fresno

Oct. 14—Northern at St. James, San Leandro

Oct. 21—Central (Northern Area) at Faith, Stockton

**TEACHING NURSERY CHILDREN, AGE 3**

by Kathryn G. Geiz

United Lutheran Publication House      Price 50¢

This thirty-two page booklet is packed with information helpful to teachers of three-year-olds. In it are many practical suggestions for pre-session activities, story telling, encouraging pupil contributions and home-church relationships.

Here are some illustrative excerpts:

Most pictures should tell two stories: God's part and our part in the world familiar to the children. . . . Nancy finds that all the grown-ups in this room look like mother does at home. They are not wearing hats. . . . The teacher's understanding of the individual child's needs and abilities will enable her to guide the playtime with more valuable results. Concise, positive reminders emphasize Christian habits: "We take turns," "We share," "We hit clay, not other children." . . . It's been a very happy and profitable morning for Nancy. Let us not spoil it by rushing her out of the room. We want an orderly closing to leave the child quiet, relaxed, and in a happy frame of mind.



# Director's Column

## *Spiritual Growth in Five Dimensions*

By R. A. VOGLEY

*American Lutheran Church*

SEVERAL departments and the auxiliaries of the American Lutheran Church have jointly planned an emphasis for the congregations which begins in September 1956 and continues into 1957. This combined field emphasis was first considered shortly after the 25th Anniversary goals had been planned. The Program and Policy Council approved the basic idea. Area chairmen have now personally informed the pastors and a key layman from every congregation about the spiritual growth emphasis.

The purpose of the entire emphasis is to strengthen and intensify the good work already being done by our conscientious pastors and laity.

### **The Five Dimensions**

*Deepen Spiritual Life*

*Heighten Attendance Interest*

*Lengthen Soul Outreach*

*Broaden Organization Participation*

*Intensify Stewardship Conviction*

To achieve these goals in the congregation an organizational structure is necessary. Each congregation should appoint a planning committee. This committee co-ordinates the work of the parish education committee, the loyalty committee, the evangelism committee, the stewardship committee, and the organization committee. Complete details are included in the promotional booklet which is in the hands of every pastor in the American Lutheran Church.

Since a congregation's parish education committee has important responsibilities in the program we present a brief summary of its different phases.

In addition to its regular work the parish education committee is asked to assume special responsibility for promoting more Bible study, prayer, meditation, family devotions, and the reading of Christian literature in every home in the parish. Each committee will determine how this may best be done through personal contacts, through demonstrations, the dis-

tribution of promotional material, the use of audio-visual aids, and the like at meetings of different groups and in the Sunday school.

### **Resources**

The promotional packet includes sample tracts which may be used. The new tract, "Light Within Our Homes," indicates the importance of family worship, and how family devotions may be conducted.

The filmstrip, "At Home With God," may be used. Its guide contains suggestions for arousing interest in family devotions.

"To a Christian," another new tract, shows that Bible study, prayer, and meditation are important factors in spiritual growth.

The committee determines what materials should be used; when and how they should be used.

### **Special Assignment**

One of the distinctive features of the emphasis is the use of a folder entitled "An Analysis of My Christian Life." The purpose of this individual analysis is to stimulate the thinking of each individual Christian about his own spiritual life and the Christian use of his time and talents.

"My Christian Life," a small folder similar in purpose to the "Fill the Church" card, is also available so that each individual may keep a record of his own daily

Bible reading, daily prayer, family devotions, and all other phases of his Christian life.

Although the parish education committee is not directly responsible for the work of evangelism and attendance in the Sunday school, the members of the loyalty and evangelism committees will certainly keep in mind the various ways by which regularity of attendance can be achieved and the outreach of the Sunday school strengthened.

The school will also be interested in further developing the stewardship program and practices and thus the Sunday school helps to intensify stewardship conviction.

### **Church Workers' Institutes**

This is our final reminder of the dates and places for our Church Workers' Institutes scheduled from the first week of June to the second week of August. The details of the courses and registration blanks have been prepared for each congregation. We hope that your school has already planned to send one or more teachers to the 1956 Church Workers' Institute in your district.

Texas—June 3-8, 1956  
 Midwest—June 24-29  
 Tri-District—July 1-8  
 Illinois—July 1-8  
 Wisconsin—July 22-27



Northwestern—July 22-27  
 California—July 29-August 3  
 Dakota—July 29-August 3  
 Minnesota—August 5-10

### The Vacation Church School

All plans should now be ready  
 for your vacation church school.  
 The teachers have had their first

staff meeting. General procedures  
 have been discussed and approved.  
 You have examined the new nurs-  
 ery course. The visual aids have  
 been ordered. The schedule has  
 been publicized. Everything is  
 ready for the most effective vaca-  
 tion school your congregation has  
 ever had.

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## BOOK

THEN AND NOW—The Truth About Prohibition and Repeal  
 by Deets Pickett, Tem Press 25¢

The use of alcohol is rapidly becoming one of the nation's most re-  
 tractory problems. Alcohol is a depressant and a narcotic. It has a  
 definite effect upon the brain and central nervous system of the person  
 using it with resulting consequences to our nation—physically, politi-  
 cally, socially, spiritually, and economically.

Church school teachers would do well to devote a portion of an occa-  
 sional teacher's or worker's meeting to a discussion of the alcohol prob-  
 lem, so as to help the children and the youth of the church make decisions  
 against the use of alcohol. THEN AND NOW is a very interesting  
 32 page booklet which gives a factual report on two eras—the days of  
 prohibition and the days of repeal. Either for personal reading or for  
 group discussion, the booklet is a fascinating way to get at the facts of  
 this phase of the alcohol problem.

The Methodist Board of Temperance is making THEN AND  
 NOW available at this low price. If you want a copy write the Edi-  
 tor of THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER, 2445 Park Ave., Minne-  
 apolis 4, Minnesota. Enclose your coin, please.

# Start Your Rehearsals Early



**V**CS—familiar initials to church school teachers and before long Vacation Church School should be the topic of many conversations among the children and adults of our congregations.

The primary responsibility for the VCS belongs to the congregation. In the interest of order and efficiency, the congregation delegates the general administration of the school to the Church Council and the pastor, who in turn choose key people to carry out various responsibilities.

The Church Council should organize and plan the VCS. The Director carries out the plans of the Church Council. The Church Council and the Director are responsible for recruiting the VCS staff. The program for training the VCS staff should be carried out by the Church Council through the VCS Director. The administrative staff helps the Director to operate a smoothly running school.

The foregoing sentences might appear in any good VCS resource book.

Like all educational activities, VCS takes imagination, planning, and hard work. Preparation is the key and each person concerned with the workings of the school plays an important part. The different phases of preparation may be divided chronologically—before the school starts, during the time the school is in session, and after the school ends.

## **I—Before**

The Council should select and call a VCS Director and work closely with this person in planning the school. It should also determine what kind of school is to be held. For example, should the school be a co-operative school with other Lutheran churches, should it be a co-operative school with other denominations, or should it be operated by the con-



gregation alone? Other considerations would be determining the location, dates, length of daily sessions, and method of financing.

In addition, the Council should select the curriculum, call the teaching and administrative staff and provide a training program for the entire staff.

There should be at least three training sessions before the VCS begins. There could well be daily sessions during the school and evaluation sessions after the VCS.

These training sessions should be as follows:

A. At the first meeting, the Director and the leaders of each department should meet to establish the aims of the school and decide the general plan for the school, i.e., the daily schedule, the special events, etc.

B. The second meeting should be a meeting of the entire staff. Here the Director should give the plan of the full program for the school. Following this presentation the staff should be divided into departments and each department leader should introduce to his or her teachers the material which the Church Council has approved for use. At these department gatherings the material should be distributed. While these department meetings are in progress, the Director should meet with the administrative staff to lay out procedures

concerning secretarial work, registration, transportation, etc.

C. At this third session, the staff should meet by departments to:

- Plan the day to day program
- Make complete lesson plans for the units of work
- Determine supplies needed and report to director
- Agree on responsibilities within the department.

## II—During

The Church Council should visit the school while it is in session, if at all possible.

The Director should not teach. He or she must be the chief administrator. He will move about the school making frequent visits to the various departments and be a friend and counselor to all.

While VCS is in progress daily staff meetings should be held to:

- Meditate and pray
- Evaluate the work
- Make necessary modifications in plans.

## III—After

Shortly after the close of your VCS, hold the following two sessions:

A. The staff should meet by department to:

- Evaluate the curriculum
- Evaluate the program
- Sort, return and store materials left over.

B. The Director and the department and administrative leaders should meet to:

Evaluate the aims of the school

Evaluate the plans of the school.

The Church Council should evaluate and act upon the Director's summary report. It should work with the pastor, church staff and members on a follow-up program to:

Win new families for the church

Carry over VCS techniques into the SS

Interest children and adults in other activities of the church.

There is great satisfaction in

singing in a choir or playing in an orchestra. You do your small part. Alone the part seems insignificant. But joined and knit together with the other parts by the skillful direction of the conductor it becomes a thing of power and beauty. Your small part, mystically multiplied, has reached far beyond its own limitations.

There is something of that quality in a well run VCS. Everyone feels it—teachers, pastor, the administrative staff and those handling the transportation. That is why it is important to start your "rehearsals" early.

In brief, then, may we state the *before, during and after* programs of the VCS: 1. Plan early. 2. Have a good time. 3. Follow through.

## *Resurrection*

*Don't sit and mourn your ship of dreams  
That may be lost at sea;  
The world still moves, the sunlight gleams—  
Success is yet to be.  
Don't waste the years in vain regret  
For joys that passed you by,  
The future's yours, there's promise yet—  
Great things before you lie.*

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN



## Our Vacation Bible School

By MARETTA MATTSON

EACH year during the months of April and May plans are being made for the coming sessions of Vacation Bible School. All churches are confronted with some problems concerning the organization of their Vacation Bible School. In our small church we are not in an ideal situation. But we are thankful for the means we have and are striving to improve the facilities.

During past summers we divided our scattered rural congregation into geographical sections and the Vacation Bible School was carried on in several rural public schools. This plan did not succeed

because of various difficulties. In a small Vacation Bible School conducted in a rural school the children may lose some of the ideas of the church they acquire when in the house of God. The material used must be altered and adapted to the variety of ages of children in the two groups.

When I taught in the small section Bible School in a rural school, I taught the lower grades. The children I instructed varied from the kindergarten pupil to the child who had just finished the fourth grade. Everyone knows the ability of children in a wide-range age group is varied. Many times the older children were not interested in the lessons, which had to be simplified for the youngest to understand. There were only two teachers in each of the schools, but all classes were carried on at the same time in the same small room.

Another reason we decided



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*Miss Mattson is a teacher in the rural schools as well as a church school teacher. She is a member of Elim Lutheran Church of Hooper, Nebraska.*

against having geographical-section Vacation Bible School is that the children who were of confirmation age needed to come to the church



each morning to attend their class. This often meant that parents had to drive to two different places the same day. Since both schools began and dismissed at the same time one child or the other needed to wait for the arrival of his parents.

The teacher problem confronted us then and still does. In order to carry on three schools at least six teachers were needed besides the pastor. Often the person who was available to teach lived a long distance from the school where she was needed. Anyone living in the rural area is well aware of the trouble a little rain and poor roads present.

When the arrangement just mentioned was used the classes were held from nine o'clock in the morning until eleven-thirty for a period of two weeks. Many of the parents did not approve of this, especially those who needed to take their one child to the church perhaps six miles or so in one direc-

tion and the rest of the children several miles in another direction.

Vacation Bible School as we now have scheduled for the past two years meets at the church only and is held from nine o'clock until three in the afternoon for one week. Many of the mothers will accept a teaching position if they are away from their domestic duties with their children for this shorter period of time. Since ours is a rural community and the last week of May is busy for the farmer, the wife has extra help for whom to cook and a two week session does not meet with the approval by all.

### **Enrollment**

The enrollment in our Vacation Bible School ranges from eighty to ninety children. This past year we were fortunate to have enough teachers to conduct classes for all the children enrolled in the regular Sunday School classes. The children ranged in age from three to fourteen years old.

The youngest group held classes in the kitchen of the church. A small table was purchased for the Sunday morning class held in this room and with the little chairs they were adequately seated. These children did much work with their hands, for example, drawing pictures relating to the story taught that day.

The teacher told the children



the story. Then she retold it with the aid of flannel-graph. This use of the flannel-graph held the attention of even the youngest child more than mere pictures used to illustrate a story. The retelling for the flannel-graph was done by the children and the teacher. Many times the children asked to re-tell the story and arrange the figures properly. Songs were sung correlating with the story. The scripture texts memorized were those which the children had heard used in the story.

The songs which these little folks learned were sung for the entire assembly of children during the opening session of school. Many times since last summer these youngsters have sung the various songs for such occasions as the annual Nursery Roll party, the Family Night, and other occasions.

### Assistants

The second class held sessions in the balcony of the church. Fortunately this was our smallest class and could be adequately housed in the small balcony. The table and chairs needed to be moved to the corner of the room for the story session and during the period for games. These children were those who had finished the kindergarten and first grades in public school. The teacher of this group as well as all of the other groups had an

assistant. Our purpose in having assistants is to train them to be teachers in the future as well as to aid the teacher. Our assistants are selected from high school students who are interested in teaching Sunday School and Vacation Bible School in the future.

The main room of the church basement is divided by means of curtains into three sections. One class is for children who have completed the second, third, and fourth grades. Besides their workbook material the class makes booklets about subjects correlated with the lesson. In this class and in all of



the other classes Bible verses are learned each day. Last year, a book was also made by each pupil illustrating the Bible text of the day. Pictures are acquired from old calendars, from unused Sunday School pamphlets and from other sources. A story hour was held outdoors in the afternoon. All of the children in this class looked

forward with much anticipation to the story hour.

Another class included those children who had completed the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. The teacher and her assistant instructed the children from the lesson workbooks. Booklets were also made similar to the other class booklets. In this class there was more memorization work than in the three previously mentioned classes. The memorization varied according to the edition used. Generally it included catechism, Bible texts and verses of hymns.

### **Begin Confirmation Studies**

The confirmation class meets in the main part of the basement. Their work concerns a study of one book of the Bible—usually The Acts of the Apostles, a study of Lutheran worship, a study of the symbols of the church, as well as Bible history and memorization of The Lord's Prayer, The Apostles' Creed, or The Ten Commandments. The new confirmation class for each forthcoming year is organized during the week of Vacation Bible School.

School opens each morning at nine. All of the classes meet in the basement for a general worship session. The daily scripture is read by the various members of the confirmation class who also lead the group in prayer. Last summer,

films were viewed each day. After the viewing of the film a review was conducted by the pastor. After summarizing the idea of the film a related Bible verse was learned by the group. The following morning the children recited the verses in unison.

### **Parents' Day**

The afternoon of the final day was visitation day for the parents and friends. They visited during the regular session held from twelve-thirty until two. After the afternoon recess, the parents and children met to view slides showing the work of the church at home and abroad. The offerings taken each morning were given to the support of this work.

Enlisting teachers is our biggest problem. Some of the teachers of Sunday School are automatically eliminated from teaching Vacation Bible School because they are farmers or business men. Many others are mothers with children below the age of our classes. Most of those who do teach are teachers of public school during the year and teach Vacation Bible School during the week before they enroll for summer school in a college. By having assistants each year we are hoping that these assistants will be regular teachers the following year and in this way increase the size of the faculty.



# "I Will Teach You Concerning the Hand of God" . . .

*Job 27:11*

By AMALIA BENGTON CONREY

THE church today faces new problems and challenges. This is not unique. A changing world always brings problems, and today's world is in a whirlwind of change. There does emerge, however, one startling fact. Today the world is demanding that the church do something about these problems, demanding that she face up to them quickly, positively and with a new outlook, lest all be lost.

As seldom before, there has come to much of the world an awareness that things of the spirit not only count but are all important. If this civilization is to survive we must turn to that which is spiritual for help, since science and humanism as ways of salvation have left us in a sorry mess. A feeling of indifference toward the church is being replaced by a new interest in religion and a plea that the Church step into a position of leadership, not as a dictator in politics or

thought, not as a pressure agent, but as an institution that can guide us in right thinking, and into right action, thus becoming the conscience of the world and so pointing the way that God would have us go. This—even when the other function of the church, that of putting the individual into the right relationship with his God, is not fully understood.

To measure up to its responsibilities, two all-important facts must be faced by the church: one, that of recognizing and studying the problems; the other, that of awakening its people and moving them to want to work toward a solution. This means that a time

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*Mrs. Conrey, for the past four years director of the Vacation Church School at Los Angeles' Angelica Lutheran Church, has had wide experience as a college and public school teacher and administrator. She and her husband, David Wells Conrey, are members of Angelica Church.*

of re-measurement is at hand, not least important that of the religious education of its children and young people. It is this phase of the church's work that I wish to discuss.

There are many facets to this problem. But let us consider one, the religious training given by the church to the children within its fold and to the children within its reach.

### **The Sunday School**

Our oldest and most revered medium for religious education is the Sunday School. Much good work has been done and is being done, mostly on a volunteer basis, sometimes by trained teachers but more often by untrained teachers. At present, much is done through workshops, teacher training institutes, teachers' meetings and lectures, to bring about a higher level of teaching. There are better buildings and facilities, and money is spent for working materials and helps such as films and pictures. New courses of study are being written, some good, many inadequate.

However, the one big disadvantage, that of carry-over from one week to the next, has not been overcome. One period of teaching in a week may work for adults but for children it is impossible except where a Sunday School teacher

meets with her pupils several times during the week outside the Sunday School. Therefore we fail our children if we depend largely on the Sunday School for our religious teaching.

Obviously, people feel that the Sunday School is not enough. Thus was instituted the so-called "Released Time Program," to which many churches subscribe. This has great disadvantages, too. There is, again, the one period a week with its poor carry-over. In most cities, only the children of the 4th, 5th and 6th grades are reached. What about the primary grades? What about the junior high school?

### **Disadvantages of Released Time**

In one fine city in Southern California there are one thousand pupils taught by two teachers. Five hundred each! The periods of teaching are about thirty-five minutes, the average class about thirty-three children. Here is a situation no better than the Sunday School in some ways, and perhaps worse in number of pupils per period per teacher. In one other large city one teacher has as high as sixty pupils each period. This is an impossible situation under any circumstances, worse than impossible as religious teaching. How can one teacher know 500 individual pupils, meeting them each only once a week for thirty-five min-

utes, "... let alone lead and guide them . . ."

Many churches feel that the un-churched child is reached during the "Released Time" but that does not seem to be the case. Most of the children are also enrolled in Sunday School. In Southern California only about 25 per cent are non-churched. It would seem that the "Released Time" is only a stop-gap, not a solution.

### The Parochial School

Some churches feel that the parochial school is the answer. Again, this reaches only the few, and in many cases not the pupils that need it most. Where tuition is charged the poor are excluded. Many of these schools are crowded, so the teacher load is too heavy. Where a teacher must cover all the academic subjects plus the religious subjects, there is too little time to put into practice what is learned. *Knowing* the Bible is good but does not assure the *practice* of that knowledge, nor does it teach the children how to face the world with positive Christian conviction.

The Daily Vacation Bible School is still with us, but has become a stepchild of the church, educationally speaking. It has been whittled down so that any more curtailment will virtually make it disappear. Few church members, from pastors down, really want

this school. It seems to be maintained only because it is the thing to do. Often it is run entirely on a volunteer basis, most, if not all, the teachers untrained. Children are quick to grasp that the D. V. B. S. is not important to the adults. How unimportant it was to one church can be judged by the following: During the short period this school was in session, rather extensive alterations of some of the rooms in the school building were made; three electric clocks were installed; all the day-time women's meetings of the church went merrily on, and three outside women's groups held their meetings here.

To bring the church school back into its own, several steps must be taken:

1. A thorough re-education of the adults to the end that religious education becomes a major issue for the church.

2. A recognition and acceptance of the fact that schools cost money and this must be included in the budget.

3. A careful study of what religious education means and includes—doing away with the vague idea that "teaching the Bible" tells the whole story.

4. Re-evaluating the work and the results of the Sunday School, and with this, an open-minded study of other media for religious education.

5. While the Sunday School re-



mains the principal medium, a willingness to fully support the Sunday School, and also to revamp it if need be, so that:

(a) The actual teaching time for the Sunday School be lengthened.

(b) More well trained and dedicated teachers be enlisted, and excellent preparation by the teachers made for every lesson.

(c) The teachers be required to meet their Sunday School classes during the week to assure better carry over. This should not be merely a party, but a time of discussion and learning.

(d) Nothing less than excellent discipline must be maintained all through the school, for poor discipline actually teaches disrespect for church and church property, but worse still it makes of their Bible study, worship service and discussion something sacrilegious. Poor discipline, too, drives children away. Children actually want to behave. Children should be taught respect for one another.

(e) The courses of study be fully understood by the teacher, and in many cases modified for each community and for each class level.

(f) The placement of pupils in classes should be changed to that of maturity in learning and understanding, instead of public school grade placement.

(g) Awards be prohibited.

(h) Programs which show off and exploit the children as entertainers be discouraged.

(i) Only good and well written secular stories should be used, and only the best music be taught to the children.

(j) All the work of the Sunday School be done with only one aim in mind—teaching and guiding children in the way the Lord would have them go—and doing it with love for, and understanding of, each *individual* child.

This sets up a minimum standard. It must be evident to all thoughtful church members that much more must be given under the name of religious education than has, so far, been given. Since the majority of our Protestant children attend public schools—and if we hold to our democratic principle of separation of state and church—we must make of the public school the finest secular school possible. But we must supplement its work with real religious education for our children even if it means completely revamping our Sunday School, holding the D. V. B. S. sessions throughout summer vacation, and week-day after-school sessions every day.

Christ said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not." We do actually forbid them when we fail to provide them with the finest religious training for themselves, and so send them out into the world ready and able to point "God's way" for all.

# HE HAD COMPASSION

## *An Article About the Cerebral-palsied Child*

By RUTH M. SWANSON

**T**HUS Luke describes the Samaritan traveling on the road to Jericho. He saw a less fortunate fellow traveler, had compassion and proceeded to help him.

Church school teachers need a similar kind of compassion for the physically different children in their classes—a compassion which insists on giving these less fortunate the help they need to be happy, participating members of the class.

### **Be Alert to Handicapped**

Nearly two percent of the population of children may be classed as physically handicapped. Their disabilities vary from simple speech difficulties to crippled conditions caused by birth injury, inheritance or accident. Some may be very obvious while others are not easily detected.

Recently, public school educators have expressed a great deal of interest and concern for the cerebral-palsied children in our communities. These children are more numerous than those with

tuberculosis or polio; and quite often, because of their multiple disabilities, present greater problems.

Simply defined, cerebral palsy is a condition in which muscular control is impaired or lost, due to brain damage. The condition may be mild, affecting only one part of the body, or it may be severe with much lack of control of arms, legs and speech. Hearing and vision may also be affected.

The type of disability depends upon the area of the brain which is affected and the extent of the damage. No two cases have exactly the same symptoms, but it is possible to classify them into three general groups:

(1) The spastics whose muscles tend to contract when they are put under tension, causing stiffness and hyperactivity.

(2) The athetoids, with normal muscles but involuntary and purposeless movements. These

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children are neither able to direct their muscles in a movement they want, nor prevent the undesired ones.

(3) Other cases which may have any one of a number of neurological traits. Muscles may be normal, but the sense of balance is so affected that actions resemble those of an intoxicated person: inco-ordination, clumsiness or lack of equilibrium, sometimes tremors and stiffness of the muscles.

### **Of Normal Intelligence**

For many years the intelligence of cerebral-palsied children has been the subject of misunderstanding. It was thought that all such children were mentally deficient. Because of the great difficulty in testing children with motor and sensory disabilities, many a cerebral-palsied child has been classed as mentally retarded or even excluded from school. It has now been established, however, that as many as two-thirds of the cerebral-palsied have normal and occasionally superior intelligence.

In addition to their physical problems there are many other factors which make it difficult for the cerebral-palsied children to properly adjust to family and community living. Such related symptoms as stumbling gait, inadequate speech, etc., may cause many persons to reject them and increase their lack of self-confi-

dence. All persons who have contact with these different children must accept them first of all as children. The handicap should never be allowed to take precedence over the child in his thinking.

The cerebral-palsied children must face the reality that they live in a world made up chiefly of non-handicapped people. This will be done more readily if they have had early experiences in non-segregated groups. Rev. Harold Wilke, himself a handicapped person, ardently supports "no segregation in the church—help them become a part of the church." Obviously, this does not refer to the severely handicapped with multiple difficulties and needs; but, the mildly affected and those with one disability can profit greatly from attendance in regular church school classes.

### **Your Opportunity**

So, church school teacher, if you have such a child in your class, have compassion; help him feel that he is loved, that he belongs in the group and is important to the group and to you.

Probably one of the most important things a church school teacher can do is to help the child accept his handicap and stimulate him to make a real effort to use the physical and mental powers he has. Much depends upon the



inspiration of an effective teacher. Coupled with an understanding of the child's physical needs, there must be a big measure of patience and kindness resulting from warm, personal friendliness and interest.

### **Adjustments for Happiness**

There are adjustments which must be made to help the child become a regular part of class living. First of all, and of great importance, is helping his classmates understand and accept him. When he feels he is accepted he will have confidence to share in class responsibilities and participate in its activities as far as he is able. Given opportunities to experience success in the areas where his abilities lie, he will indirectly experience happier relationships with his classmates.

A teacher must be aware of and help others become aware of the child's abilities rather than his disabilities. Care must be exercised, however, when stimulating a child to do his best, not to make the requirements beyond his capacity. These children must not be motivated to action by placing them in competition with others. Such procedures result in anxiety, blocking and failure. Rather, appeal to their interest in some phase of the work at hand and capitalize upon that.

These children, as well as the

non-handicapped, are entitled to individual consideration. If a child is left-handed, place him at the table where he will not disturb his right-handed classmates. Remember the lack of muscle coordination and provide large size pencils or crayons and wide-lined paper. Do not expect much small, precise work. Also, avoid crowding him—allow room for his unpredictable, involuntary movements. Consider the halting speech and slow mental processes; be patient in waiting for the answer the child is so anxious to give. Regard the apparent lack of interest as probably due to a limited attention span or difficulty in focusing the eyes for any length of time and allow for change of activity.

Audio-visuals and simple everyday materials which motivate the child's interest and bring out his creative ability, are necessary teaching aids to make learning comprehensive and alive.

### **Co-operative Compassion**

It is important that the teacher is acquainted with the child's family. The church school, along with the public school, needs to help the parents to a respectful attitude toward their child. The cerebral-palsied should be regarded as a normal child in relation to his place in the family. To be overly solicitous is doing him a dis-service. Real improvement is

accomplished only by the use of his own abilities, however slow and perhaps painful the process may be. Parents must realize, too, that because he lives in a world of non-handicapped, the cerebral-palsied must be neater in dress, more attentive to detail and more responsive to interpersonal relationships to compensate for his handicaps.

All persons concerned with the welfare of these physically different children need to remember that they are average in many re-

spects, and lead them to a recognition and use of their abilities to become happy persons, making their fullest contributions wherever they are—with family and friends in church, school and community.

The church school teacher needs to pray for the kind of compassion that will not allow him to pass by on the other side, but will insist on helping the different child grow in fellowship with God, in Christian faith and in Christian living.

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### *This Is Our Task*

*Thanks to the science of nutrition, we know how to feed children so they will grow tall and strong and their death rate will be extremely low. But this science has not taught us how to give them a robust nervous system, a balanced disposition, courage, moral sense and intelligence, nor how to protect them against mental degeneration. This problem concerns the future of millions of children.*

—ALEXIS CARREL in  
*Reflections on Life*

# The Natural Man and the Redeemed Man

By GEORGE B. ARBAUGH

WHAT is *natural*? A newborn, unclothed baby is in "a state of nature" but the baby's parents would not feel "natural" if they were in such a state of nature. Thus we use the word nature to stand for almost exactly opposite notions. We say that sadists are unnaturally depraved but also say that sin itself is natural. For example, if little Willie is naughty, the neighbor lady may try to console his mother by assuring her that such conduct is "natural" in small boys.

Exactly here lies a great peril in our thinking about sin. The sinner defends himself by saying, "Well, it is only natural, after all . . . ." And even the Christian is likely to make the same mistake by referring to our "sinful human nature."

## Are We Naturally Sinful?

If man is by nature sinful, then it follows of necessity that God created man sinful, since human nature is that which we are by creation. At times, some foolish

religious thinkers have actually argued that this is so, saying that a weak, evil or stupid god created us, and that it is for this reason that we are sinful. Then, these same people argued, a good god, the Father of Jesus Christ, took pity on us and decided to save us.

## Sin Is Not Natural

These thoughts should make it very clear that we must be careful indeed when we talk about the natural man. Sin is not natural! Since sin is such a grave problem, we should also note another danger in regard to it. Just as we must not think of man as being sinful by creation, so, too, we must not think that sin is an occasional mistake which may or may not afflict mankind. This is what we mean by saying that human nature has fallen: none of us can successfully and wholeheartedly love God. Sin is like a chronic disease,

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a kind of spiritual introversion, which changes a person so that the image of God is always marred. Even when we try to do good we find ourselves guilty of faults which are subtle and for that very reason are the more deadly. Thus we may conclude that we are not sinful by our created nature, but are unavoidably wicked due to our fallen state.

### Do We Have a Nature?

If man is not naturally but only chronically sinful, what is natural to man? Is there a natural man? Do we have a nature? A great philosopher, Ortega y Gasset, has argued that man does not have a nature, but that instead he has only a history. What Ortega meant was that things have natures but that man is not a thing. Thus salt, stones, trees and tombs have natures, i. e., they have certain qualities which are always true of them. Any *thing* has a nature because it is always itself, but man does not have a nature because he is always changing, choosing, growing, becoming different.

It would seem more reasonable, however, to say that it is our *nature* to have a life-history, for while we do change, we also remain remarkably identical with ourselves. When you become eighty-five years old you will remember things which you did at the age of five. You will be happy

over some of the memories and will feel guilty over others. This is the miracle of being a person, that, in spite of endless change and growth, a man is the same person through all the years and through all the changes.

We conclude that the natural man is a growing and changing person, with conscious and voluntary unity in change. This makes us realize one common error. Most people seem to think that we "grow up" until we are "up" and then stop growing. But actually, to live is to grow, create, respond, choose, act, dream! We are never up. If ever a person stops growing then he is dead. Life is a process of enlargement, growth, and responsible action for beings who are created in the image of God.

### What Is the Image of God?

This question is very difficult to answer. However, the term image of God certainly includes the fact of our being personal. We are somehow like God in being persons. As persons we have unity in changing experience and purpose in our behavior. Like our Father in Heaven who creates, we, too, in our small way are creative as we act to transform our hopes into actualities.

For us to be true images of God means that we must will what God wills and love the good. However, since no one else can do any per-

son's willing and loving, no two of us can be alike even though we should all possess the one image of God. It is our nature to be unique in free decisions. We are in God's image when in our faltering ways we redeem something of good from an evil situation and likewise when we bring holiness where before evil had prevailed.

Perhaps one reason why it is so difficult for us to define the "natural" man is that when we examine ourselves we find in us instead an "unnatural" man. St. Paul described the painful experience of every Christian when he wrote, "The good that I would, that I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." Because we are always our own worst enemies it is really true that the natural man is the redeemed man, for what God intended us to be can never come into existence without the power of Jesus Christ. We begin to understand what humanness is, and what man is by his created nature when we see the humanness of Jesus Christ. It is for this reason that Christ is referred to as the new Adam, or new man.

### **The Redeemed Man**

When a person is redeemed he is for the first time genuinely human, whereas before God redeemed him that man was not truly himself, being at war with himself and at war with God. When we learn

of Christ, we put away the former manner of life, which is corrupt, and are renewed in spirit, putting on "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. 4:20-24)

### **God's Work**

However, to speak of the redeemed man without at the same time speaking of God is somewhat like looking at roses cut from the vine. The rose apart from the vine is meaningless, impossible, and withering. So, too, a redeemed man is meaningless, impossible, and withering apart from God. Redemption is not so much a condition or state in which the Christian exists as it is God's work, His victorious warfare. God's love for us is not an easy love, painless and natural, a kindly quality which we should have all along understood to be characteristic of His affectionate nature. Christ does not come with the pleasant assurance that all is well with the world, that sickness and evil are an illusion, that everyone should be happy, and that God naturally loves His dear children.

Redemption is instead God's deliberate warfare, so intense a struggle and so resolute that He will not retreat even when He is defeated or overcome. Instead, our Father struggles divinely so that when His will is frustrated, when His love is despised, and when His



kingliness is crowned with thorns, just then He succeeds in demonstrating the victory of love which will never yield. The Cross of Jesus becomes the throne of glory.

There is a dangerous softness in much of religious expression, for example in the kind of pious feeling which likes to symbolize itself by means of pretty flowers, gentle lambs, and innocent children. But Christ observed cantankerous children, lost sheep, tares and weeds, savage wolves, and cruel men. And in Christ, God waged unrelenting warfare against sinners, not in order to destroy them but in order to redeem them. Redemption means both the conquest of the evil man and the salvation of this same man by the power of love.

St. Paul makes plain what it is like to experience this cleansed and restored or redeemed humanness. "But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth . . . . And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Col. 3:8-10)

### **The Old Man and the New**

Now we are confronted with a second great mystery. The first mystery was that what we take to be the natural man is really unnatural, i. e., deformed and sinful. The second mystery is that what we call the redeemed man remains

unnatural, deformed, and sinful. We call a Christian a saint because God has redeemed him, but the sad truth is that a Christian "saint" is really a forgiven sinner.

This does not mean that we cannot grow in grace or in goodness. Surely every one who accepts God's love in Jesus Christ cannot but become a nobler person, whose saintliness is evident to others even if not to himself. Yet somehow as one becomes saintly he never leaves behind the need for forgiveness. The Christian may leave behind the path of public crime but only to fall into new and guiltier sins of self-righteousness. There is nothing so appalling as the sin of the church member who is sure that he is always in the right and that the Lord is on his side. Luther understands well how long the redeemed man must continue to be penitent; consider how he persuades us to think about the meaning of our baptism:

"It signifies that the old Adam in us is to be drowned: and destroyed by daily sorrow and repentance, together with all sins and evil lusts; and that again the new man should daily come forth and rise, that shall live in the presence of God in righteousness and purity forever."

Nevertheless, if the Christian's redemption is never complete so long as this earnest but troubled



life endures, it is also true that redemption is present now. God not only forgives evil but also implants the power of good. Even though we cannot bring holiness to perfect fulfillment, we do experience it and know intimately the beauty of holiness. God has not only called himself our Father, and adopted us as sons, but also through the power of Christ who dwells in us we actually do come to live as this wonderful Father and obedient Son. We come to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report. The Christian is human, natural, genuinely human according to the divine image, even if also he is a split person, still clinging to evil even while reaching out to God.

### In Christ

There is one respect in which the redeemed man is not simply *restored* to his original nature. While the redeemed man is restored to the genuine humanness of creation, he finds something new, a new focus for his life. He is a man *in Christ*. Christ did not merely reveal what was always so, namely God's will to Fatherhood. In addition, in this Jesus of Nazareth, who walked and worshiped in Galilee, who taught and healed, who endured mockery and misunderstanding, God created a fellowship with us. Here on the Cross He won His victory by loving sinners

unflinching. He broke the power of the devil over us. He rose from death and blesses us with eternal life. He broke the mastery of sin, so that new godliness can take root. The redeemed man does not live in a vacuum; he walks and talks with Jesus Christ and thus learns to live as a true child of God.

### Life in the Spirit

We commonly say that the redeemed man lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet it should be added that we must not emphasize the Holy Spirit in contrast to Christ. The redeemed man does not leave Christ behind and turn to new gifts of the Holy Spirit. "No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12:3) To live as a redeemed man means that God's continuing work as Spirit will lead one into ever new experience of the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Likewise, life in the Christian church is the life of the *redeemed* or an experience of redemption, i. e., to be in the church means to be *justified* (forgiven) and *sanctified*. The churchman is not God's *beloved*, but is instead God's redeemed creature. The beloved, in any instance, is loved because of his or her loveliness. But God loves us in spite of our lack of

loveliness. There is no comprehending such love! Further, when God loves us He does not approve or tolerate what we sinfully are, but corrects what we are through the power of His sacrifice. For God to love sinners means that He forgives (is devoted to us in spite of what we are) and sanctifies (recreates us, not by external compulsion but by spiritual persuasion).

Church people are good or just, not in the sense that they have been able to leave pride and self-righteousness behind but simply in the sense that God actually does love them, accepts them as they are. Our justification is not a human achievement but is divine charity. Also, church people are sanctified in that like the Father in Heaven they too wage unrelenting warfare against all evil, most of all—sadly—in their own character. Sanctification does not mean

that the dark stains are gone but that the believer is struggling at the task of cleansing.

Finally, love is a mark of the redeemed man. It may even be taken to be the distinctive mark. Now it may seem strange to say that love is the mark of the redeemed man if, like the Redeemer, this man endlessly wages war on evil. But there is actually no contradiction at all in this. Just as love is God's *weapon* for overcoming evil, so too it is the weapon of the redeemed. The love which comes into our experience as God's unanticipated and suffering friendship reflects itself in man's showing the same quality of devotion. Indeed it is more than the same *kind* of devotion. It is God's own power or love giving actual vitality to the human spirit. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:12)

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*George Arbaugh has written "The Growth of a Christian," a course planned to help parents, teachers and all workers in the church to understand more clearly what Christian character is and how they can help persons to achieve it. The book may be purchased from your church publication house for 90¢. Highly recommended.*